

**In the Claims:**

**Please enter the following amended claims 1, 9, and 15-17:**

sub c1

A1

1. (Once Amended) A semiconductor workpiece, comprising:

a metal layer;

an inorganic dielectric ARC layer disposed on the metal layer, wherein said inorganic dielectric ARC layer functions as a hard mask; and

a photoresist layer disposed on the ARC layer opposite the metal layer.

PR  
ARC layer  
metal layer

sub c2

A2

9. (Once Amended) A metallic stack for a semiconductor interconnect, comprising:

a metal layer;

an inorganic dielectric ARC layer disposed on the metal layer, wherein said inorganic dielectric ARC layer functions as a hard mask; and

a barrier layer disposed on the metal layer opposite the ARC layer.

A3

15. (Once Amended) The metallic stack recited in claim 9 wherein the stack is about 1,000 to 20,000 Angstroms thick.

16. (Once Amended) The metallic stack recited in claim 15 wherein the stack is about 5,000 to 8,000 Angstroms thick.

sub C3 7 17. (Once Amended) A semiconductor device, comprising:

an oxide layer formed on a wafer; and

at least one microelectronic structure extending from the oxide layer and including:

a barrier layer disposed on the oxide layer;

a metal layer disposed on the barrier layer; and

an inorganic dielectric ARC layer disposed on the metal layer, wherein said

inorganic dielectric ARC layer functions as a hard mask.